19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

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triplets are also thought to share the "k'la" among them, but I am not sure as I have not made inquiry concerning such cases.

846

It is common for Karen women in Lower Burma who are recovering from child-birth, to observe the custom that prevails among the Burmese, namely, to have a fire on an improvised hearth or in a brasier set near the mat on which they lie. The fire is kept burning constantly for several days or a week after their confinement, to assist them in regaining their strength. The hotter their rooms are kept, the more quickly they are supposed to recover their strength.

CHILDHOOD

854

The period of childhood is a short one among the Karen.[1] The baby early accompanies its mother on her journeys from place to place or to work, slung on her back by means of an old blanket or skirt. When she puts the infant down, she improvises a hammock out of this cloth by tying ropes to its corners and swinging it from the rafters of the house or the little hut in the field or from the branches of a tree. When the child grows a little older he plays about, while his mother is at work; and when he goes with her he rides on her hip. (See p. 172.) She does not always give up carrying her first child on the arrival of the second. More than once I have seen a mother struggling along with a smaller child on her back and a larger one astride of her hip.

857

The play of Karen children, more than that of the little folk of more advanced races, is imitative of the work of their elders. With little in the way of toys they gather a few bits of broken jars, which the girls utilize to cook rice in. The boys induce their father or some other male relative to make for them miniature bows and arrows, slings, and spears with which they assail dogs and crows, as well as small game along the edge of the jungle clearing. Streams afford places for them to play in the water or try for fish. With the sap of the banyan (bird-lime) smeared on a bamboo they may catch a crow for a pet. They tie together two bamboos, plantain stocks, or black bottles and lead them about as a yoke of oxen,

[145]

[1] On account of the fact that the Karen do not keep accurate age records, and also because of the shyness of the youth, it is difficult to obtain exact information as to when the children come to the age of puberty. The ages usually given me have been twelve for the girls and a year or two later for the boys. Two cases of arrested development of girls have come under my notice. Both of these died when they were reported to have been about sixteen or seventeen, and both were reported never to have had any periods. One appeared to be not more than a girl of nine or ten, while the other was larger but was emaciated and had defective eyes.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

857 and in various ways manage to get a good deal of fun out of the few years elapsing before they have to assume their share of the labor in the field and the village.

Girls and young maidens are early trained to assist their mothers, especially in carrying up the water needed for domestic

[854 291]

CHILD RIDING ON ITS MOTHER'S HIP
The youngster does not like to face the camera so well as his mother. He is riding on her hip, which is the common method of carrying children all through the Orient. A silver earring can be seen in the mother's right ear.

524 857 uses. Their imitative play is, therefore, largely devoted to doing some of the things they see their mothers do. Besides this play at house-keeping they have other pastimes. Thus, when they hear the

19: Marshall M-6 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

repeated calls, "tauk-te, tauk-te, tauk-te," of the ubiquitous gecko or spotted lizard, which lives in hollow trees and sometimes in the houses, they count off "richman, poorman, beggarman, thief," etc., in the playful attempt to discover to which of these groups their future husbands will belong, just as maidens in English-speaking countries count the petals of a daisy for the same purpose. They participate in running games, such as "tag," repeating rhymes in counting out the players and choosing the one who is to be "it." When the players are about to be counted out, they all squat on the ground near the one who is to say over the ditty, with their right fists extended in a circle. She strikes each fist as she utters a syllable, and the one whose hand is struck at the final word becomes the new leader or victim in the game.

There are many of these ditties in use by the children, some of which are composed of words which originally may have had meanings that are now lost, while some may be simply a string of resonant syllables like our own "eeny, meeny, miny, mo." One of these rhymes, which was written down for me in the Pegu Hills, runs as follows:

"I" ku, hki ku, paw ta lu, saw maw ku ku li, lu t' re, maw ku ta aw yu."

Others, however, take the form of a narrative, for example, the following which speaks of a Burmese Buddhist monk ("pongyi"), an object of terror to the Karen children. Hence, they say:

"Hop kyi klo hko neu weh lo
Leh aw hsa leu ta lu hko.
Pla wa law teh, hseh ba a hko."

Translated, this reads:

"The 'pongyi' with close shaven head, miserably hungry,
Went to eat his food on the ridge.
The unpoisoned arrow falls and pierces his head."

The children have other little songs which they use in play as, for instance, when in the villages on the plains they run on the logs laid from house to house to serve as walks during the heavy rains. One of their verses is:

"Paw paw to me law ten to di do."

Another version of this is:

"Paw paw pgha me law teh pgha di do."

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

857
524
538
[539]

The translation of the former is:

"Walk, walk the bridge. If it falls the bigger it is," meaning the bigger the bridge, the greater the fall. The rendering of the latter is:

"Walk, walk, the bigger the man, the greater the fall."

When playing with the chickens, children sometimes catch one of them and pretend to rock it to sleep, droning the while:

"Hsaw hpo, mi, mi.
N' mo n' pa leh hsu Yo.
Heh ke so ne na p' theh tha wa ko lo.
Aw gha lo gha lo.
Me aw, hsaw hpo."

The translation of this runs,

"Sleep, sleep, little chick,
Your mother and father have gone to Shanland.
They will come back, bringing you a supply of white betel-nuts.
You can eat them one by one.
Sleep, little chick."

[137]
857
524

Both boys and girls play with the seeds of the giant creeper ("maw keh"). These seeds, which are often two inches in diameter, look much like flattened horse-chestnuts or buckeyes. They come from the enormous pods, a yard or more in length, of the vine, *Estada pusoetha*, which grows a hundred yards or over along the tops of the forest trees.* The games in which these seeds are used are played in the dry season. An even number of players is required, divided into two equal groups or "sides." Each side must have the same number of seeds, which are made to stand on their edges by being set in grooves in the hard earth. The rows thus formed are from eight to ten feet apart, according to the age of the children playing. One player begins by spinning a "shooter" at the opposite row, aiming to knock down one or more of the nuts in it. Whether he succeeds or not, his opponent takes his turn, and the players thus shoot alternately back and forth, until one row or the other is entirely knocked over. The winning side is, of course, the one that first demolishes the other's row.

In another game played with these seeds the two sides are again equal in the number of players. However, only those on one side

* Burmese children also play with these seeds.

19: Marshall M-6 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

857
524

set up their seeds, while each of those on the other has one shooter, which he spins in turn at the row. If he hits one or more of the nuts, he wins them. When he knocks down all the seeds of his immediate opponent, he changes places with him. If he does not succeed in knocking all of them over, using as shooters all of the seeds he may have won, he changes places and sets up the seeds that he had at the beginning of the game. Sometimes these games are played by the children while squatting on the ground, but often the boy who is shooting will snap his seeds while sitting astride the back of another boy, after the manner of playing "ride the pony," which is sometimes indulged in by European boys.

526
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Karen youths are accustomed to try their strength in boxing, though it is more properly wrestling. Especially in the Moulmein district is this developed as an art and the Karens there are reputed to be the best wrestlers in the country, so much so that even the Burmans concede their superiority. The contest is a sort of catch-as-catch-can affair, in which the object is not to throw the opponent but to scratch him so as to draw blood. The first drop of blood showing on a contestant means that he has lost the match. There seems to be few rules, for hands and feet are used indiscriminately. This art appears to have been practiced for a long time, for John Crawfurd in his *Journal*, in 1827, says that "a Karyen peasant was granted a village in perpetuity by the King [of Burma] on account of his peculiar skill in boxing. He was to teach the youth of this village his noble art."[1] This peasant seems to have come from Bassein.

[1] John Crawfurd, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor General of India to the Court of Ava*, Vol. II, 184.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Karen AP7

224

343. KAREN SPRING-SPEAR (DYAN.)

making traps and snares for animals, whose habits they observe closely, and whose calls they mimic. Squirrels are their principal quarry. For deer they set a spring-spear called *dyan* at a salt-lick. This is a source of danger to travellers, who have to be on their guard for the warning sign set at the approaches to the *dyan*. They keep common wild cocks and pheasant cocks, as well as doves, for decoys. The decoy-cock is tied by the leg to a post in the centre of a circle of snares; when a wild bird hears him crow and comes to fight he is caught. [857] The chief game of Karén children is transfixing bamboo hoops as they bound past, a practice for spearing running game. The Karéns use a cross-bow [411] (No. 204), with simple, and occasionally also with poisoned arrows. All the [412] Karén utensils are of home manufacture, with the significant exception of the *dâ* and axe, their chief implements, which are made by Shans and Burmans. [439] They even make rough pottery when at a distance from the market. The women spin, dye, and weave their own yarn; but they are beginning to use the [286] ready-dyed yarn that is imported. Every member of a Karén household 585 labours for the common fund. Young Karéns do not marry till mature—twenty to twenty-four. Marriages are arranged by the elders; but, if a pair mate of their own choice, the lad has to give a buffalo or its value to the girl's parents. Unlike the marriages of the civilised races of the country, the Karén marriage is a great festivity. 291 Karén unmarried women wear only a [562] long smock (*thindâing*) [224] of plain white. Married women wear a blue embroidered smock over a figured loincloth. 000 Men and women

344. KAREN HUNTERS BRINGING IN WILD PIG.